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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL**

Framework Strategy on Gender Equality - Work Programme for 2003

{SEC(2003) 137}

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I - Introduction

This document presents the 3rd annual work programme of the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality¹, and sets out the Commission's planned activities for 2003 in order to promote gender equality in all policy areas. The present communication sets out the priority actions of the Commission to progress with its gender equality policy in all areas. It is supplemented by the Commission staff working paper {SEC(2003)137}, which describes in detail the policy-specific activities of each Directorate-General and service to promote equality between women and men including the gender mainstreaming method. These activities reinforce the implementation of the priority actions set out in this Communication.

The annual gender equality work programmes are prepared jointly by all Commission services. The activities in the work programme are used as performance indicators, with progress and achievements being monitored by the Commissioner's Group on Equal Opportunities², supported by the Inter-service Group on Gender Equality and reported in the Gender Scoreboard³.

The experience drawn from the elaboration and the monitoring of the two previous annual work programmes shows that this is an effective approach which delivers results.

This work programme will take us to the midpoint of the five-year Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005), at which stage there will be a more detailed study of the progress made in the implementation of gender equality within the various services of the European Commission, including evaluation of resource implications (human and financial).

II - Evaluation of the implementation of the 2002 gender equality work programme

The present document highlights some of the successes achieved during 2002, on the basis of which the priorities for 2003 have been drawn up. However, as a general remark, gender mainstreaming seems to be evident only in the policies of those Directorates General and services where gender equality is expressly incorporated into the legislative basis of the policy, and/or where the employment of women in the economic sector is high. Thus for the other policy areas, gender mainstreaming does not appear to have been seriously taken up as an integral approach to better policy conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation.

Activities in 2002 centred around three priority actions, namely

- Conducting a gender impact assessment of selected policy areas, which have, up to now, not been gender mainstreamed,

¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions towards a "Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) COM(2000) 335 final.

² http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/strategy/com_group_en.html

³ http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/index_en.htm "Gender Scoreboard"

- Systematically collecting gender desegregated data on people, and using this data to develop indicators,
- Awareness-raising and training on gender issues at all levels in the Commission services

The Commission services chose several new policy areas to incorporate the gender aspect in 2002. (A full evaluation with elaborated data of all policy areas will be included in the gender score board that will be inserted in the website in March 2003).

- As foreseen in its work programme, Enterprise Directorate-General completed a Study aimed at identifying National measures promoting female entrepreneurship in the EU and EFTA/EEA countries. The main findings of this Study and a selection of cases of good practices will be presented at a European Forum scheduled for March 2003. Future actions will be focussed in the dissemination and exchange of the good practices identified among EU Member States and Candidate Countries.
- The study "**The role of women in the fisheries sector in the 15 Member States**" was finalised in 2002. This will be followed by a conference on the role of women in the fisheries sector at the beginning of 2003 in order to exchange experiences, good practises, and identify benchmark initiatives to be promoted.
- Gender Mainstreaming in the **Structural Funds** is a good example of a close co-operation between various Commission services, in this case Directorates-General Regional Policy, Employment and Social Affairs, Agriculture, Fisheries and Education and Culture. A thematic working group of Member State officials and Commission services has been created in the framework of the inter-service group of the Structural Funds. The aim of the group is to co-ordinate actions focused on gender equality and to analyse specific questions related to the Structural Funds. The main event in 2002 was the Third European Seminar "Equal opportunities for women and men in the Structural Funds". Also the Commission Communication "Implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Structural Funds programming documents 2000-2006" is planned to be adopted by the end of 2002.
- **A sub-group on external relations** has been established within the context of the Inter-service group on gender equality, with representatives of Directorates General External Relations, Development, Trade, Enlargement, EuropeAid, Humanitarian Aid Office and Employment and Social Affairs. The sub-group is preparing a review of the existing policies, including the state of implementation of the three Communications in the external relations area (Gender in development co-operation, Women in conflict prevention, the EU's role in the promotion of human rights and democratisation).
- In the context of the above sub-group, Directorate-General Development has taken up the coordinating role of the Directorate-General External Relations on mainstreaming gender equality in external relations. On a regular basis meetings are convened for exchange of experiences, methodology and instruments to strengthen implementation.
- Directorate-General Development has participated in innovative policy initiatives on gender equality with respect to trade relations (Sustainability Impact Assessment), Corporate Social Responsibility and core labour standard and labour relations. The aim is to introduce gender equality into areas not previously examined.

- As part of the **evaluation of the European Employment Strategy** a Eurobarometer survey among policy-makers responsible for elaborating and/or implementing the National Action Plans on employment was conducted. The aim was to gather information on tools for gender mainstreaming in Member States and opinions of the policy-makers on the concept and the implementation of gender mainstreaming in national employment policy. Moreover, the Employment Committee sub-group on Indicators worked on improving the set of indicators on gender equality used for monitoring the implementation by Member States of the 4th Pillar of the Employment Guidelines.

In the area of data collection and engendered indicators, progress is being made:

- In the Commission Communication on **Structural Indicators** it was recognised that the gender breakdown of the indicators should be considered as a general principle. Therefore, a gender breakdown was extended to ten structural indicators.
- **Eurostat** and OECD have now integrated gender breakdown into the relevant tables of their MSTI (Main Science and Technology Indicators) section of their R&D. From the end of 2002 it will be possible to obtain clean and harmonised descriptive data on the presence of women in science.
- Moreover, Eurostat has launched a project to continue the development of child care statistics and published several reports on gender specific topics (Statistics in Focus) and a Panorama publication on "The life of women and men in Europe"⁴.
- The report on the concrete future objectives of the Education and Training Systems in Europe includes gender mainstreaming indicator as a special field of action.

Concerning awareness raising and training :

- In October 2002, the Directorate-General for Personnel and Administration inserted a presentation on equal opportunities in the introduction courses organised for newly recruited Commission staff.
- The Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs integrated gender mainstreaming in its Induction Course for newcomers.
- A seminar, including officials of the Member States, was organised by Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs on how to improve gender mainstreaming in the Social Inclusion Process. The seminar allowed mutual learning on the basis of good practices of mainstreaming gender in the identification of challenges, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies aiming at combating poverty and social exclusion. Special attention was given to the institutional mechanisms used to promote gender equality.
- Figures on the evolution of the female/male balance of staff show that Directorate-General Internal Market presents an attractive environment for both genders :

⁴ ISBN 92-894-3568-2

- Seeking tools that promote a family-friendly equal opportunities working environment (organisation of internal meetings at convenient hours for all staff concerned).
- Part-time working is favourably looked upon both for female and for increasingly larger male number of staff.
- Directorate-General Internal Market encourages and will continue to encourage the staff - in particular female staff - to participate in courses to prepare for management positions.

III - Priority actions for 2003

The Commission gender equality work programme for 2003 builds on the successes achieved in 2002 and includes pro-active as well as reactive interventions, i.e. adjusting existing policies by applying gender mainstreaming, and introducing specific interventions designed to improve the situation of the disadvantaged or under-represented sex in the respective policy area.

The gender equality work programme consists of a dual approach – horizontal priorities applicable to all Directorates General and services; and policy specific initiatives by each Directorate-General and service, covering:

- The integration of a gender perspective in policy initiatives (gender mainstreaming) and
- Specific actions addressed to the disadvantaged or under-represented gender in the relevant policy area.

The following priority actions will be implemented by all Commission services:

1. The Commission has now endorsed the generalised approach of Impact Assessment⁵. Thus from 2003, an Impact Assessment based on the three pillars of social, economic and environmental sustainability will gradually be applied to all major new initiatives, i.e. those which are presented in the Annual Policy Strategy or later in the Work Programme of the Commission. This impact assessment will replace existing requirements for business impact assessment, gender assessment, environmental assessment, small and medium enterprises assessment, trade impact assessment, regulatory impact assessment etc. Indeed, the new integrated Impact Assessment tool builds on these existing practices and incorporates them into the new tool.

It remains however for individual DGs to ensure that the impact assessments they conduct take into account gender impacts as well. It is equally important that in addition to impact assessments of new policy initiatives, the work of gender mainstreaming continues especially for existing policy initiatives, as part of interim and ex-post policy analysis.

⁵ Communication from the Commission on Impact Assessment COM(2002) 276 final, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/press_room/presspacks/pdf/276-4en.pdf

2. Since gender sensitive policy planning and analysis require gender desegregated data as input in the relevant policy area, each service will enhance its efforts to collect gender desegregated data and systematically break down by gender all related statistics. All services will continue the development of indicators, which will allow assessment of progress of gender equality in that policy. The Interactive Policy Making Initiative (C (2001) 1014 of 3 April 2001) allows all Commission services to obtain knowledge through two Internet based instruments (an IPM - knowledgebase fed by existing European networks and a mechanism for structured on-line consultations) to collect and process stakeholders' views as gender desegregated data and systematically broken down by gender.
3. There is still a considerable need for awareness-raising on gender issues in the Commission services and for training of the Commission staff on the methods for assessing the different impact of policies on women and men respectively and for mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into the policy planning and implementation process. Each Directorate-General and service will therefore insert gender mainstreaming modules in its training plans for staff members of all levels, in particular management level. This may take the form of specific gender equality or gender mainstreaming training sessions or as modules of general training courses.

IV. - Gender balance in Committees

The Commission is committed to achieving gender balance in its committees and expert groups as set out in its Decision 2000/407/EC of 19 June 2000⁶, adopted as a follow-up of the 1996 Council Recommendation on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process⁷. The Commission Decision on improvement of gender balance in committees and expert groups sets the target of 40% minimum participation of women and men respectively.

The Decision applies to existing and new committees and groups of the Commission, and includes all members whether appointed by the Commission itself or nominated as representing a Member State or other organisation. For the former group, the Commission attempts to balance participation at the time of replacement of members (or at the end of the term of appointment) by requesting a gender-mixed proposal of four candidates for each vacancy. For nominations by other parties, the need for gender balance is recalled at the time of nomination.

The first survey of expert groups of the Commission was conducted in 2000, with a second one in 2001. A third survey covering all Commission committees and expert groups was conducted in 2002. Thus it is possible to begin to detect a trend.

⁶ Commission Decision relating to Gender Balance within the Committees and Expert Groups established by it Official Journal L 154, 27/06/2000 p. 34-35

⁷ 96/694/EC: Council Recommendation of 2 December 1996 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process Official Journal L 319 , 10/12/1996 p. 11 - 15

	All members		Members appointed by the Commission		Members nominated by other bodies	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
2000	13.5%	86.5%				
2001	29%	71%	30.5%	69.5%	28.6%	71.4%
2002	30%	70%	26.1%	73.9%	31.1%	68.9%

The results of the 2002 survey indicate that in comparison with the previous two years, the number of women in committees and groups overall has slightly increased. Whilst this is a positive trend, it is regrettable that this upward shift is due to the enhanced nomination of women by other bodies, while Commission appointed members seem to have become less gender balanced. Thus it is clear that continuous and increased efforts are necessary so that the aim of 40% minimum participation of women and men respectively can be reached. In the sectors where the participation rate of women has decreased, special efforts are needed.

Results vary between the different services. There was gender balance in committees in six Directorates General in 2002: Development; Enlargement; Education and Culture; Health and Consumer Protection, Europeaid and External Relations.

Progress will continue to be monitored and reported as part of the work programmes of the Framework Strategy on Gender Equality.

Gender balance in committees

